

I. HOW DOES THE COMPUTER WORK

The actions of the computer are based on the following;

Accepts information - input

Processes information – processing

Stores information – memory

Gives out information – output.

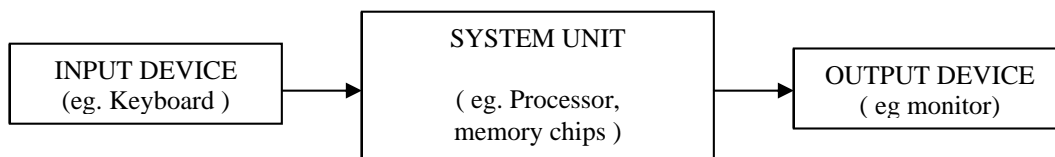
Therefore the computer thinks (function of the processor), it remembers (function of the memory chips) and it communicates (function of the input and output devices). Without the memory chips it is just like saying, ‘ I have a great idea but I can’t remember it’, and without the input/output devices it is just like saying, ‘I have a great idea but I won’t tell you’. The computer takes in information using any of the input devices, changes it into more useful and beneficial information.

The information put into a computer, with specific reference to digital computers, is measured in bits and bytes as earlier indicated. The computer works using combinations of the figures ‘0’ and ‘1’. ‘0’ represents **OFF** while ‘1’ represents **ON**. A byte has 256 possible combinations of 0s and 1s or can be seen as a pattern that represents a number between 0 and 255.

The information once processed by the CPU is encoded using this combination of ‘0’ and ‘1’.

When the processed information is not readily needed it can be either stored in file storage devices such as the HDD or on a floppy disk. However if (or when) needed, the stored information is decoded into the figures, pictures, words, sounds that the user is familiar with and presented to the user via the output devices.

The above can be presented using the diagram below.



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